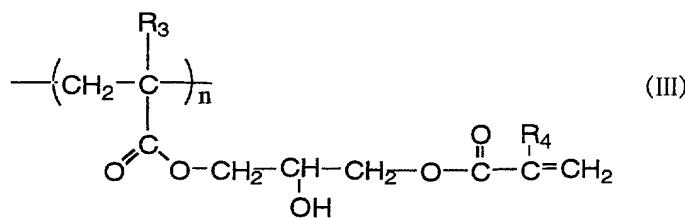
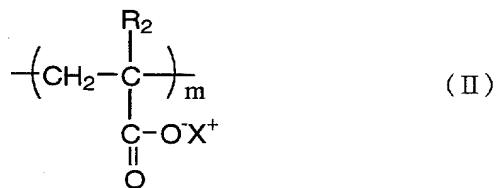
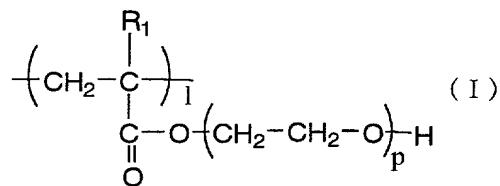
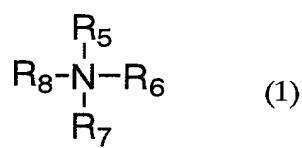


What is Claimed is:

1. A polymer compound containing monomer units represented by formulas (I) to (III):



wherein each of  $R_1$  to  $R_4$  is hydrogen and/or a methyl group;  $p$  represents an integer between 1 to 10 inclusive;  $X$  represents hydrogen, an alkali metal, or an ammonium represented by formula (1):



wherein each of  $R_5$  to  $R_8$  represents hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkyl group, or a C1-C3 alkanol group; and a plurality of Xs may be

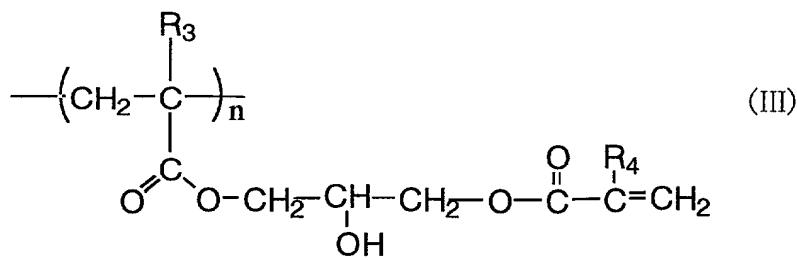
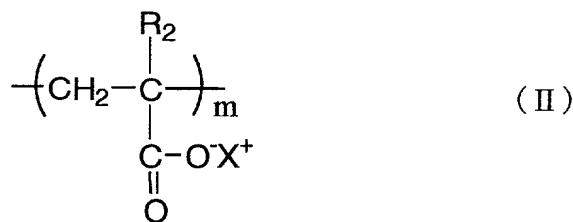
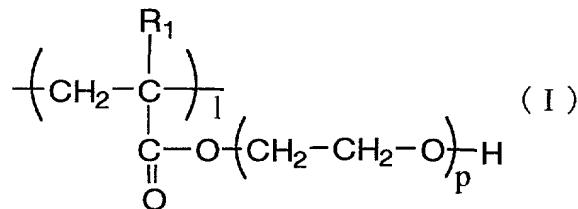
the same or different from one another,

the compositional proportions of the monomer units falling within the following ranges:

2 mol% ≤ l ≤ 73 mol%; 8 mol% ≤ m ≤ 83 mol%; and 15 mol% ≤ n ≤ 80 mol%.

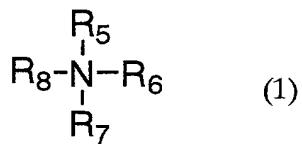
2. A polymer compound according to claim 1 also containing a monomer unit other than monomer units represented by formula (I) to (III) in an amount of 10 mol% or less.

3. A method of producing a polymer compound containing monomer units represented by formula (I) to (III):



wherein each of R<sub>1</sub> to R<sub>4</sub> is hydrogen and/or a methyl group; p

represents an integer between 1 to 10 inclusive; X represents hydrogen, an alkali metal, or an ammonium represented by formula (1):



wherein each of  $R_5$  to  $R_8$  represents hydrogen, a C1-C3 alkyl group, or a C1-C3 alkanol group; and a plurality of Xs may be the same or different from one another, and the compositional proportions of the monomer units falling within the following ranges:  $2 \text{ mol\%} \leq l \leq 73 \text{ mol\%}$ ;  $8 \text{ mol\%} \leq m \leq 83 \text{ mol\%}$ ; and  $15 \text{ mol\%} \leq n \leq 80 \text{ mol\%}$ ,

which method comprises adding glycidyl (meth)acrylate in a predetermined amount to a copolymer comprising at least (meth)acrylic acid and at least one of 2-hydroxyethyl (meth)acrylate and polyoxyethylene mono(meth)acrylate.

4. A method of producing a polymer compound according to claim 3, wherein at least one of an N-nitrosophenylhydroxylamine ammonium salt and 4-hydroxy-2,2,6,6-tetramethylpiperidin-1-oxy is employed as a polymerization inhibitor.

5. A photosensitive composition containing, as a component, a polymer compound as recited in claim 1.

6. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5, which contains water as a solvent.

7. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5, which contains a polymerizable monomer.

8. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5,  
which contains a colorant.

9. A photosensitive composition according to claim 5,  
which contains at least one of a photopolymerization  
initiator and a photosensitizer.

10. A pattern formation method comprising forming a  
coating film by use of a photosensitive composition as  
recited in claim 5 and developing by use of water; i.e., a  
neutral developer.